

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Original) An automatic stop/start controller for a vehicle which automatically stops and starts a vehicle engine without operation of an ignition key, wherein, a control unit prevents the automatic stop of said engine if a direction indicator of said vehicle is activated, said control unit automatically restarts said engine without operation of the ignition key if said direction indicator is activated after said engine is automatically stopped, and said control unit prevents an automatic stop of said engine until a distance traveled by said vehicle after said engine is automatically started is greater than a predetermined automatic stop prohibit distance.

2. (Original) The automatic stop/start controller for the engine as defined in Claim 1, wherein said control unit sets the automatic stop prohibit distance after automatic stop as a value greater than an automatic stop prohibit distance before stop, which automatic stop prohibit distance after automatic stop is a condition to prevent the automatic stop of the engine after the engine is automatically started, and which automatic stop prohibit distance before stop is a condition for the distance of travel during the automatic stop occurs.

3. (Original) The automatic stop/start controller as defined in Claim 1, wherein a motor generator assists said engine in generating power at least while said vehicle is running.

4. (Original) The automatic stop/start controller as defined in Claim 1, wherein the controller establishes a first automatic stop prohibit distance prior to an occurrence of an automatic stop, and establishes a second automatic stop prohibit distance subsequent to the occurrence of an automatic stop, wherein said second automatic stop prohibit distance is greater than said first automatic stop prohibit distance.

5. (New) A vehicle, comprising:
an internal combustion engine;
an electric motor-generator drivingly connected to said engine to assist in driving of said engine when functioning as a motor;
a transmission drivingly connecting said engine to vehicle wheels;
a direction indicator movable from an inactive state to an active state for selectively indicating a turning direction of the vehicle; and
a stop-start controller that selectively and automatically stops and starts said engine without use of an ignition key;
said stop-start controller automatically restarting a stopped engine upon activation of said direction indicator into said active state and preventing a running engine from being automatically stopped whenever said direction indicator is in said active state, and controller preventing an engine that has been automatically started from being automatically stopped unless the vehicle travels a predetermined distance.

6. (New) A method for controlling an automatic stop and an automatic start of an internal combustion engine of a vehicle having an electric motor-generator drivingly coupled to the engine, a controller that selectively and automatically stops and starts the engine without use of an ignition key, and a direction indicator for selectively indicating a turning direction of the vehicle, comprising the steps of:

determining whether conditions for an automatic stop of the engine are satisfied by sensing at least a shift lever position, a brake pedal position, and an idle switch position; preventing stopping of the engine if the direction indicator is in an active state;

stopping the engine if (1) the automatic stop conditions are satisfied, (2) the direction indicator is in an inactive state, and (3) the vehicle has traveled more than a predetermined distance since a preceding automatic stop of the engine; and

starting the engine if the direction indicator is moved from an inactive state to an active state.